

Remarks/Arguments

The office action dated January 12, 2005 (the "Office Action") has been received and carefully noted. Claims 1, 7 and 9 have been amended and claims 12-16 are new. Support for the amended claims and the new claims can be found in, for example, FIGS. 5 and 6. The above amendments to the claims and the following remarks are submitted in response to the Office Action.

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 6 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,624,331 by Lo ("Lo"). Lo is directed to a golf club head which includes at least two (2) openings on the top plate area with a reinforcing bridge located therebetween, as shown in FIGS. 1, 2. In addition, the composite "cover" in Lo includes multiple pieces 12 and 14 which are inserted into the at least two (2) openings in the top plate, forming part of the top plate of the golf club head itself. These inserts do not cover the top plate.

In contrast, as defined in amended claim 1, the applicant claims the step of "forming a composite cover to fit over at least said top plate to cover said at least one opening." Thus, the composite cover in amended claim 1 fits over and covers the top plate and the at least one opening therein, and is therefore a cover rather than an insert. Accordingly, because "a claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found . . . in a single prior art reference" (MPEP 2131), Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1 and its respective dependent claims 3, 5 and 6 are patentable and allowable over the Lo reference.

Claim 2 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Lo in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,183,377 by Liang ("Liang") in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,997,415 by Wood ("Wood"). In the Office Action, the Examiner notes that the golf club heads in Liang and Wood have plural openings in the sole plate. However, the Applicant notes that in Liang, there is no indication that the sole plate has plural openings or has a composite cover; rather, the golf club head 4 in Liang is one solid unit formed from a plurality of plates. Col. 2, lns. 32-38. Additionally, the composite "cover" in Wood is comprised of multiple pieces 316, 318 and 320 which are "integrated with the substantially open top 302" and "integrated with sole plate 314," respectively. Col. 4, lns. 49-56. Together, the cited references do not teach or suggest the claim limitation of "a composite cover to fit over at least said top

plate to cover said at least one opening.” Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claim 2 is patentable and allowable over the references.

Claims 4, 7 and 9-11 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Lo in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,776,011 by Su (“Su”). The golf club head in Su is comprised of a number of component parts affixed together. Col. 3, lns. 40-43. The golf head in Su, however, does not include any openings in the top portion or sole portion thereof as shown in FIGS. 1, 2. Moreover, the golf club head in Su includes “three distinct stamped pieces” and does not include the claim limitation of “a composite cover to fit over . . . at least a portion of the metallic assembly thereof.” In addition, the Applicant notes that FIG. 4 of the golf head in Lo depicts a metal stiffener 30 which is part of the metal crown 16, and not part of the “composite cover” as discussed at Col. 2, ln. 34. As noted previously, the composite “cover” in Lo includes multiple pieces 12 and 14 which are inserted into the at least two (2) openings in the top plate, form part of the top of the golf club head itself. Thus, together, the cited references do not teach or suggest the claim limitation of “a composite cover to fit over at least said top plate to cover said at least one opening.” Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 7 and dependent claims 4 and 9-11 are patentable and allowable over the references.

Claim 8 has been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Lo in view of Su, Liang and Wood. Applicant notes that none of the golf club heads in any of these references includes the claim limitation of a composite cover fitting “over at least said top plate.” Thus, together, Lo in view of Su, Liang and Wood do not teach or suggest the limitations in independent amended claims 1 and 7 and their respective dependent claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that dependent claim 8 is patentable and allowable over the references.

If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant’s undersigned representative at (213) 689-5148 to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 07-1853. Should such additional fees be associated with an extension of time, applicant respectfully requests that this paper be considered a petition therefore.

Respectfully submitted,



Shelley M. Cobos, Reg. No. 56,174
Attorney for Applicant

Squire, Sanders & Dempsey, LLP
801 South Figueroa, 14th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Telephone: (213) 689-5148
Facsimile: (213) 623-4581